

Killarney Provincial Park

Options for the Future

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Killarney Provincial Park Options for the Future

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Prologue

Purpose of This Document

This document has been designed to provide the public with information and to seek public participation in the planning of Killarney Park. It contains a summary of events to date and alternatives for the future.

Public Hearings

Opportunities for individuals and groups to present views on proposals contained within this document will be provided through public hearings called for this purpose. The hearings will be held at the following locations:

Sudbury, August 23 8-11 p.m.
President Motor Hotel

Espanola, August 24 8-11 p.m.
Espanola High School

Killarney, August 25 8-11 p.m.
St. Joseph's Separate School

How will public views be incorporated into the planning for Killarney Park?

Materials presented at the public hearings will be analyzed and summarized. Summaries will be made available for distribution. The insights gained through the public hearings will provide guidance toward the completion of a master plan for the park.

When will planning be completed?

Following completion of the hearings work will begin immediately to complete the master plan for the park. The master plan will provide for the stable and orderly evolution of Killarney as a primitive park. It is anticipated that the plan will be completed early in 1973.

I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to participate in the planning of one of Ontario's most outstanding resources.

Leo Bernier

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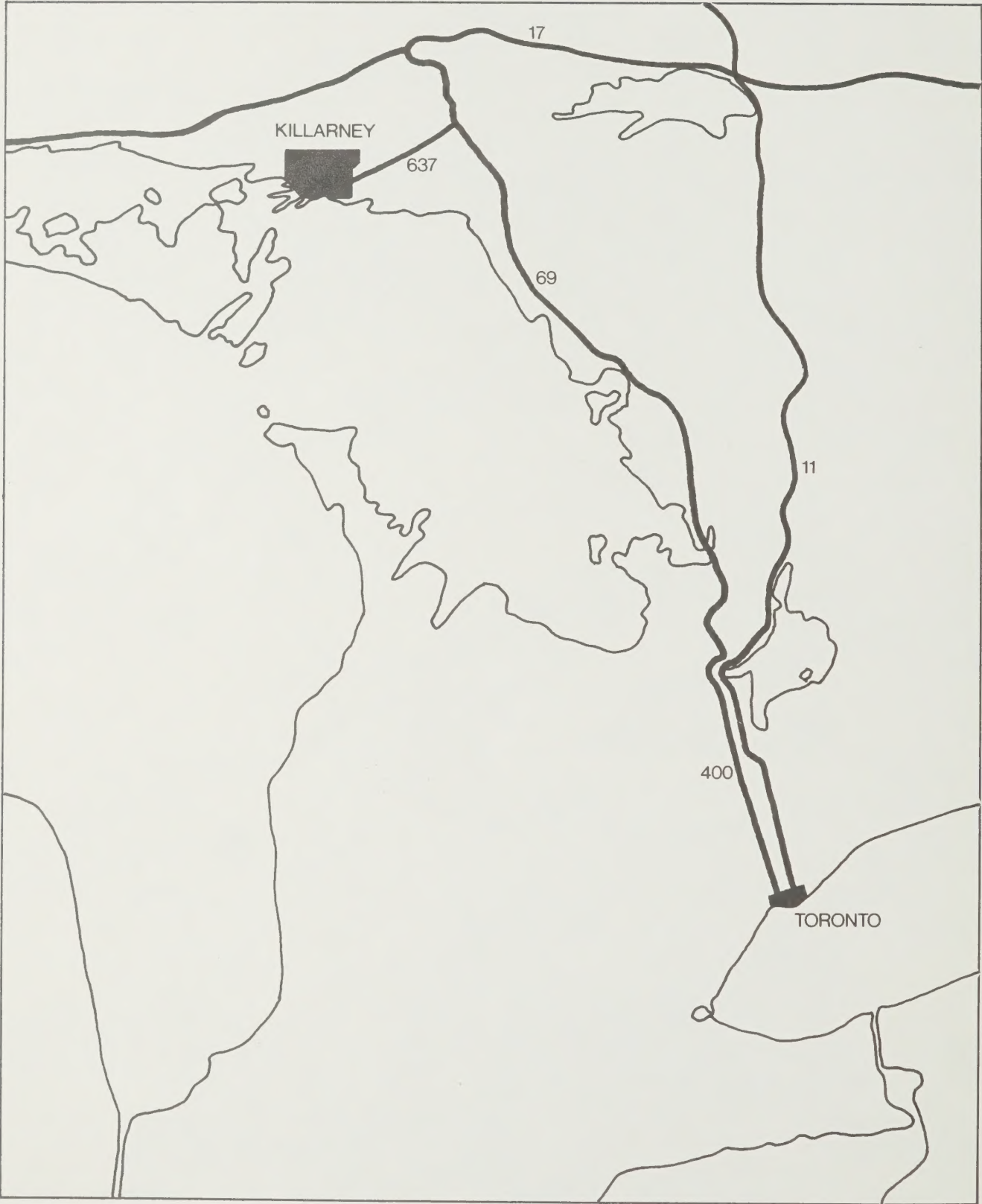
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The location of Killarney Primitive Park



1. A Primitive Park

History Killarney Park was established by Order-In-Council on July 16th, 1964. It encompasses 84,990 acres of the La Cloche Mountains on the north shore of Georgian Bay.

Following a period of intensive planning study initiated in 1968 a recommendation was made to have Killarney classified as a primitive park. This recommendation was accepted by the Provincial Government and announced in the following statement by the Honourable William Davis, Prime Minister of Ontario, in the Provincial legislature on June 25th, 1971:

"Mr. Speaker:

It is with great pleasure that I announce the creation of Ontario's second primitive park.

As the Honourable Members know, we have 108 provincial parks throughout Ontario. Many of these include large tracts of ruggedly beautiful forest and water areas in their natural state. However, the only area designated to date as a primitive park has been Polar Bear Provincial Park, some nine thousand, three hundred squares miles of the Hudson Bay lowlands country along the shores of Hudson and James Bays.

I wish to announce today that the government has accepted the recommendations of the Department of Lands and Forests and the Ontario Parks Integration Board to re-designate Killarney Provincial Park as a primitive park.

Under the classification system for provincial parks, a primitive designation means that the area is left in its natural state. No permanent buildings are allowed. No mechanical means of transport, such as motor boats or snowmobiles, are permitted. There are neither organized campgrounds nor road access. Equally important, all utilization of natural resources is prohibited. Therefore, the re-classification of Killarney will mean that we now have a 132 square mile area in a wilderness setting easily accessible to the majority of the people of Ontario, providing a combination of natural features of high quality for a recreational experience.

For the benefit of those who may not be familiar with the area, may I say that Killarney Provincial Park is situated on the north shore of Georgian Bay, some 40 air miles south of Sudbury. It is within reasonable driving range of Toronto and the major population areas of Southern Ontario. It is accessible by road and water. The park is in the central core of the La Cloche Range, a series of most attractive white quartzite hills popularly known as the Killarney Mountains. Its spectacular topography, clear lakes and rugged Georgian Bay shoreline make it one of the finest scenic areas in Ontario.

To achieve a truly primitive status for the Park, a number of existing and conflicting land uses will be gradually phased out. As an initial step, a timber volume agreement in the park was recently cancelled and the company was located elsewhere. A small area of the park that had been cut over will be rehabilitated by tree planting; the timber road will be blocked to prevent access by this means, and buildings and improvements removed to restore the site to its natural state.

All other conflicting uses including patented properties, land use permits, traplines, hunting and licences of occupation will be gradually phased out as well as existing car camping and day use activities. The Department of Lands and Forests will continue to operate the park as a natural environment park until the necessary primitive condition has been reached following the gradual elimination of other activities.

I commend this Park to all Members who may be planning a canoeing vacation this summer."

2. What is a Primitive Park?

Five different types of provincial parks are recognized in Ontario. Under the Provincial Parks Act:

"The Lieutenant Governor in Council may classify any provincial park as a natural environment park, a nature reserve, a primitive park, a recreational park, a wild river park. . . " R.S.O. 1970, c.371, s.4".

Primitive parks are established to provide wilderness recreation and opportunities for non-destructive scientific and educational studies. Wilderness recreation refers to the benefits of expansive solitude and challenge derived from undisturbed natural landscapes.

Natural and wild landscape qualities are important factors governing the selection of areas for primitive parks. Park landscapes are selected which possess qualities permitting extensive travel by water or trail using only non-mechanical means. It is important that some of these areas be accessible to our major urban areas.

With the exception of discreetly selected and located access areas, development of facilities is not part of the management program for primitive parks. The access areas provide simple facilities for users entering or exiting from the interior areas of the park.

Resources within primitive parks are protected to permit the maximum opportunity for the study of natural processes. For this reason, utilization of resources through hunting, trapping, mining and logging are not permitted.

3. Why Killarney Park?

The decision to designate Killarney as a primitive park was based upon the following factors:

3.1. Killarney park is widely recognized as one of the outstanding landscapes in the province. Its spectacular elevations, white quartzite hills and clear deep lakes offer an excellent environment for wilderness recreation activities such as canoeing and hiking.

3.2. Killarney Park is not well suited to intensive development. In the occasional small bay and lakeshore indentation campsites with sand beaches and steeply sloping wet beaches may be found which are suitable for use by interior campers. Elsewhere, throughout the park, the shallow soil and rugged topography present an adverse environment for intensive park development.

3.3. Killarney park has played an important role in Ontario's history and culture. Historic values have been found which span a period of nearly 9000 years. These range from an archaeological site dating from about 7000 B.C. to evidence of common pioneering activities such as logging and mining.

Artists from many fields have had a long and intimate relationship with the wild beauty of the country in and around the park. During the 1930's and 1940's artists such as Arthur Lismer and A. Y. Jackson frequented the Killarney area, especially Baie Fine, Grace and Nellie Lakes, and O.S.A. Lake (named in 1933, after the Ontario Society of Artists).

Harry Somers, the distinguished Canadian composer, produced his "Sketches for Orchestra" and "North Country Suite" following an exhilarating canoe trip with Eric Aldwinkle near O.S.A. Lake in 1954. In this same period Aldwinkle composed the suite of six paintings entitled "Northern Country Poems".

3.4. The resources of the park offer varied opportunities for scientific and educational study. The most spectacular of these is the geological contact zone between the red granite rocks of the Grenville Province and the white quartzite rocks of the Superior Province. The variations in base rock geology in turn give rise to interesting variations in plant life. The park also contains some of the most undisturbed examples of southern hardwood forest as well as examples of more northerly boreal conditions.

3.5. Prior to the planning studies on Killarney, Polar Bear Park on the shores of Hudson and James Bay was Ontario's only primitive park. Recognition was given to the fact that, if primitive parks were to be meaningful to the majority of us, a need existed to ensure that areas other than Polar Bear—which is accessible to very few people—be established as primitive parks; areas within reasonable travelling distance of our major population centres; and within the budgetary limitations imposed on many of us. Killarney with its combination of wilderness recreation values and accessibility was recognized as one of the very few areas that could fulfill these requirements. It was also recognized that this would require the removal of existing land use conflicts within the park. In comparison with other areas that might have been selected (like Algonquin Park, for example) in which the economic stability of local communities would be vitally affected, Killarney provided one of the very few opportunities to create a park of this nature in the southern part of the Province.





The Distribution of Population in Southern Ontario
Relative to Killarney Park

- > 538
- 71 - 538
- 22 - 70
- 1 - 21
- < 1



4. A Management Policy

The general policy and management guidelines outlined in this section comprise the proposed framework around which the primitive park will be planned and managed. These statements would apply to any plan alternative which is selected for implementation.

4.1. Land

4.1.1 There will be no further disposition of land in the park.

4.1.2 Non-conforming land uses will be removed. The provincial policy for many years has been to retire any private holdings or other alienated lands within park boundaries whenever the opportunity arose. The designation of Killarney as a primitive park does not change the policy but rather accelerates an existing program to meet this designation.

4.1.3 External land uses in the buffer area around the primitive park will be controlled through the North Georgian Bay Recreational Reserve land use plan (figure 3). In general, the zone designation is a means to achieve total public ownership of the area around the park for recreational purposes. Boundary adjustments for Killarney Park will be made within the confines of this zone.

4.1.4 Roads are considered to be inconsistent with the non-mechanical means of transportation and solitary recreation experiences to be provided in a primitive park. For many years local interests have expressed a desire to have a road cross the mountains that would join Whitefish Falls and Killarney. In 1968 a feasibility study by the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (then the Department of Highways) determined that the estimated cost of this road link was in excess of 4 millions of dollars and could not be justified. Subsequent examination of the regional transportation network indicated inadequate traffic demand existed for a Killarney to Whitefish Falls travel route.

4.1.5 The areas in park reserve will be removed from disposition under the Public Lands Act.

4.2. Recreation and Tourism

4.2.1 *Primitive Zone*—The entire area of Killarney Park has been designated as primitive zone with the exception of discreetly chosen access zones. The objective of the primitive zone is to provide solitary types of recreation experience. Facilities will be limited to hiking and canoe routes, simple interior campsites, fireplaces, and earth pit toilets.

4.2.2 *Access Zones*—Access zones will provide the following facilities and services: park administration offices and information; an access zone campground for interior users only, usable by those entering or leaving the interior of the park; wilderness outfitting; car parking for interior users; day use facilities; and interpretive facilities.

George Lake campground will be maintained in its present form with facilities for car camping until such time as additional organized camping is developed in the Killarney area.

The Ministry of Natural Resources will encourage the development of appropriate private recreation facilities in the vicinity of the village of Killarney.

4.2.3 *Carrying Capacity*—A research program will be initiated which, by 1980, will permit the designation of user capacity limits for the park. This research program will be based upon, and will establish, both physical and psychological levels of use.

4.2.4 *Sports Fishing*—The sports fisheries of the park will be managed by restricting harvest through enforcement of legislative regulations. Winter fishing and the use of all types of live or dead aquatic animals for bait will not be permitted.

4.2.5 *Wildlife*—Hunting and trapping will be prohibited throughout the park. The Ministry of Natural Resources may, if park values are seriously threatened, institute appropriate wildlife control measures.

4.2.6 *Snowmobiles*—Snowmobiling will not be permitted. The absence of a viable winter sports fishery and the desirability of leaving wildlife populations and plant associations undisturbed support the prohibition of snowmachines throughout the park.

4.2.7 *Motorboats*—Motorized boats of any kind will be prohibited throughout the park.

4.3. Environmental Management

4.3.1 Environmental management in the park will be governed by the all-embracing principle that it is a primitive park where, to the fullest extent possible, natural processes will prevail.

4.3.2 *Vegetation*—A system of fire detection will be provided through air patrol and the tower site on Silver Peak. Fires will be suppressed where public safety and park values so warrant. The destructive effect of insects and disease will not be controlled in the primitive zone except where it can be shown that these represent a serious threat to public safety or where they threaten values in areas adjacent to the park. Damaged areas in the primitive zone will not be subject to "clean up" operations and no wood products will be removed from the park.

4.3.3 *Water*—Waters of the park will be managed at their existing levels. No new dam construction will be carried out to improve canoeing opportunities, or for any other reason. Existing structures at George Lake, Freeland Lake, Three Narrows Lake, Johnnie Lake and Proulx Marsh will be maintained. A program of water quality research will be instituted to provide a continuing record of the quantity and quality of park waters.

4.3.4 *Air*—Recreational flying over the park will be discouraged.

4.4 Interpretation

4.4.1 Interpretation in primitive zones will be limited to trails with simple markers.

4.4.2 A major system of public information and park interpretation will be established at park access zones and appropriate access points.

These programs will stress the following two themes:

Resources—Through appropriate displays, publications and trail guides, the visitor will be made aware of the geological, historical, vegetative, wildlife and art dimensions of Killarney Park.

Wilderness Management—Through personal services including talks and short audio-visual programs the visitor will be informed of wilderness management and the role that he, as a park user, can play in it.

5. Options for the Future

The planning program has identified a number of key elements that are significant in the achievement of the primitive park concept for Killarney.

These elements, briefly stated, are as follows:

1) *Unique Land Attributes*—To whatever extent possible, the plan for Killarney Park should include those elements of geology, topography, history, vegetation and wildlife that make it an outstanding provincial feature.

2) *Access*—In the future management of the park it is important that access can be controlled and directed in order that the special qualities of the park are retained and that the recreation experience does not diminish.

3) *Social and Economic Factors*—Any decisions on the park must be related to an implementation program that recognizes the social and economic situation in the local communities.

4) *Quality of Recreation*—Interior park management and monitoring of external land uses is necessary to provide the elements of challenge and solitude for which the park is being planned.

5) *Size*—The size of the park should be large enough to convey the desirable elements of space and isolation. Three alternative plans relating to the above elements have been developed from planning studies for Killarney Park. A brief description and map of each alternative follows:

5.1 Plan Alternative A

5.1.1. *Boundary*—Two areas would be permanently removed from the park and rezoned to comply with the North Georgian Bay Recreational Reserve land use plan:

(i) the waters of Baie Fine which offer an excellent and well-used anchorage for yachts and small boats.

(ii) the area of the current park lying south of Highway 637 which does not contribute significant scenic or geological features to the primitive park. The highway would form the southern boundary.

The northeast corner of the current park would be converted to park reserve status to allow access to timber resources north of the park area.

The boundary would be extended west to include all of Hele Lake.

5.1.2. *Park Reserve*—A park reserve would be established to permit the future expansion of Killarney Park. The reserve would extend north to the Howry Creek chain; encompass Great Mountain Lake, Harry Lake and Peter Lake; and east to enclose the connecting waters of Johnnie, Carlyle, Bell and Balsam Lakes.

Within the confines of the reserve the discreet extraction of renewable resources and exploration for non-renewable resources will be permitted.

In line with the approved policy guidelines of the North Georgian Bay Recreational Reserve report, alienated lands within this area would be removed over time in order to meet the land use requirements of a primitive park. Alienated lands include 53 patented parcels, 8 land use permits, portions of 5 traplines, and an area under timber volume agreement.

5.1.3. *Access*—The present George Lake campground would become an access zone within the primitive park. Car camping would be retained until other facilities become available in the Killarney area. Administration, basic visitor services, day use, and wilderness outfitting would be provided. Other access control would be provided in the park reserve at Johnnie Lake and Peter Lake.

5.1.4. *Alienated Lands within the Initial Primitive Park Area*—This alternative would require the removal of the following alienated lands within the park: 48 patented parcels, 3 licences of occupation, 11 land use permits and all or part of 8 traplines.

5.2. *Plan Alternative B*

5.2.1. *Boundary*—As in Plan Alternative A, the waters of Baie Fine and the area lying south of Highway 637 would be permanently removed from the primitive park. Similarly, the northeast corner of the current park would be converted to park reserve status. The boundary on the west would be extended to include all of Hele Lake.

5.2.2. *Park Reserve*—A park reserve would be established as in Plan Alternative A to permit the future expansion of Killarney Park. The reserve would extend north to the Howry Creek chain including Great Mountain Lake; and east to an existing logging road, thereby enclosing Carlyle Lake and Johnnie Lake. The northeast corner of the current park would also be within the park reserve.

Within the confines of the reserve the discreet extraction of renewable resources and exploration for non-renewable resources will be permitted.

Alienated lands within the park reserve would be removed as the opportunity arose. Alienated lands include 50 patented parcels, 3 land use permits, portions of 4 traplines, and an area under timber volume agreement.

5.2.3. *Access*—In addition to George Lake campground, access control would be provided in the park reserve at Johnnie Lake.

5.2.4. *Alienated Lands within the Initial Primitive Park Area*—This alternative involves the same alienated lands within the park as Plan Alternative A; namely: 48 patented parcels, 3 licences of occupation, 11 land use permits and all or part of 8 traplines.

5.3. *Plan Alternative C*

5.3.1. *Boundary*—The boundary adjustments for this alternative would be identical to the other plan alternatives. A major difference is that no future expansion of Killarney Park is proposed. Therefore, no adjacent areas are established as a park reserve.

5.3.2. *Access*—In addition to the George Lake campground; access control would be provided by a Crown land access point at Johnnie Lake.

5.3.3. *Alienated Lands within the Primitive Park Area*—The alienated lands within the park that would require removal are identical to those under Plan Alternatives A and B, namely: 48 patented parcels, 3 licences of occupation, 11 land use permits and all or part of 8 traplines.

5.4. Evaluation of Plan Alternatives

The following analysis makes no attempt to present a final judgement on the values of the plan alternatives. Rather, an attempt has been made to identify the tendency of each alternative to realize a number of criteria which together approximate an ideal plan for a primitive park at Killarney. The six criteria used are unique land attributes, access, acquisition costs, mining potential of reserves, quality of recreation experience and size.

The chart that follows lists the 6 evaluation criteria and for each plan alternative shows a weak, moderate or strong rating as an indication of the extent to which each criteria is being achieved.

On the basis of the above evaluation, Plan Alternative A is the preferred concept for implementation.

An Evaluation of the Plan Alternatives

| Evaluation Criteria | Plan Alternatives | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|
| | No. A | No. B | No. C |
| Unique Land Attributes | S | M | W |
| Access | S | S | W |
| Acquisition Costs | M | M | M |
| Mining Potential of Reserves | M | S | S |
| Quality of Recreation Experience | S | M | W |
| Size (in acres) | 111,001 | 93,181 | 76,711 |

Attainment of Criteria

- W weak
- M moderate
- S strong

5.5. Notes Explaining the Evaluation Ratings

5.5.1. *Unique Land Attributes*—Alternative A receives the strongest rating because it includes the scenic values provided by the Carlyle to Balsam Lake waterway. Johnnie Lake, in particular provides some of the best vistas of Silver Peak from any canoe route in the park. It also includes representation of the Grenville Front and the Grenville Province with its differing bedrock and associated vegetation.

Alternative B receives a somewhat weaker rating because it excludes Bell and Balsam Lake and thus one-half of a major natural waterway from the park area.

Alternative C fails to encompass the geological continuity and water complexes which make the Killarney landscape a special and significant environment.

5.5.2. *Access*—Alternative A and B receive a strong rating because they ensure control and servicing of interior users by controlling use on Johnnie and Carlyle Lakes. In addition access is controlled by the access zone at George Lake. Alternative A strengthens control with a further access zone at Peter Lake.

Alternative C cannot adequately control interior use.

5.5.3. *Acquisition Costs*—The boundaries of the initial primitive park are common to the three plan alternatives. Significant acquisition costs are associated with achieving the land use requirements of a primitive park. This is apparent even for Alternative C which on the basis of all other evaluation criteria is the weakest plan to support a primitive park.

Alternatives A and B incorporate the establishment of a park reserve to permit future expansion of the primitive park. The acquisition costs for Alternatives A and B (1.5 millions of dollars), while roughly double the costs of Alternative C (3/4 millions of dollars), are very similar to one another.

5.5.4 *Mining Potential of Reserves*—Alternative C receives the strongest rating because it does not involve any additions.

Alternative B although of larger extent also receives a strong rating because no mineral resource potential has been discovered in the area. It does however lie adjacent to minor gold mineralization north of the Howry Creek waterway.

Alternative A receives a moderate rating largely because of an area of geological structures suggestive of small scale copper-nickel mineralization in the vicinity of Balsam Lake. This alternative also includes the area adjacent to the Howry Creek waterway.

5.5.6. Size—Acreage comparisons are indicated in the evaluation chart. The present park covers 84,990 acres. Area increases of 30 percent and 10 percent are required by Alternatives A and B respectively. Alternative C would involve a reduction from the present park size of nearly 10 percent.

The chart below indicates the implementation program which would be carried out to achieve for Killarney, the land use requirements of a primitive park. Any of the three plan alternatives could be brought into effect within this time schedule.

To achieve primitive park status in any park reserve areas an appropriate implementation schedule will be developed upon selection of a particular plan alternative.

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

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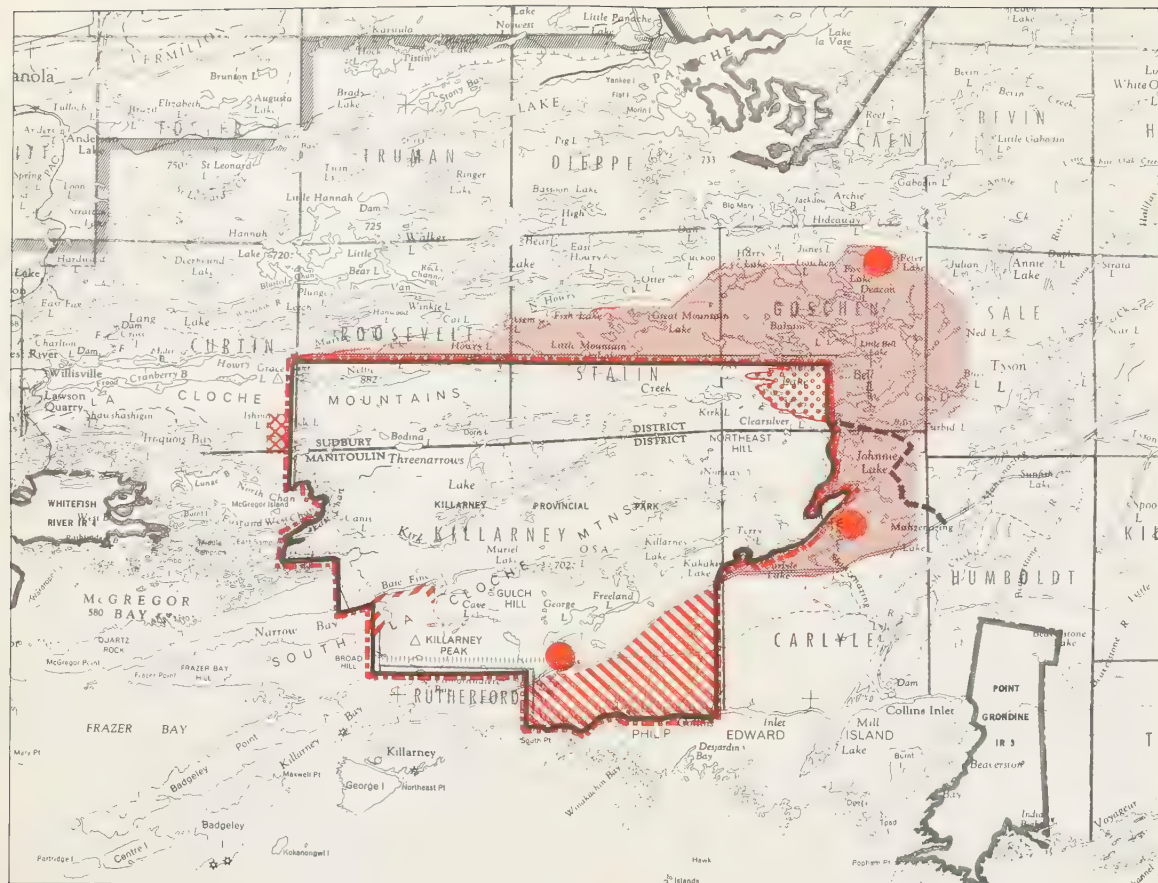
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Chief Ranger, Espanola, Ontario.
Park Office, Killarney Park.
Parks Branch, Division of Parks and Recreation, Queen's Park,
Toronto

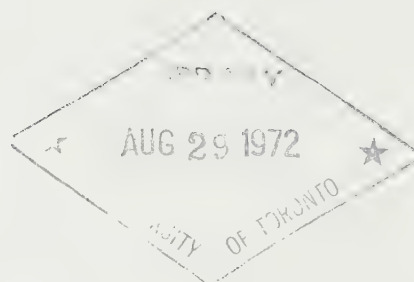
Plan Alternative A



Killarney Provincial Park

-  Existing Park Boundary
-  Park Reserve
-  Access Control
-  Hele Lake Addition
-  Current Park Area Converted to Park Reserve
-  Deletion/waters of Baie Fine
-  Deletion/South of Hwy. 637
-  Logging Road













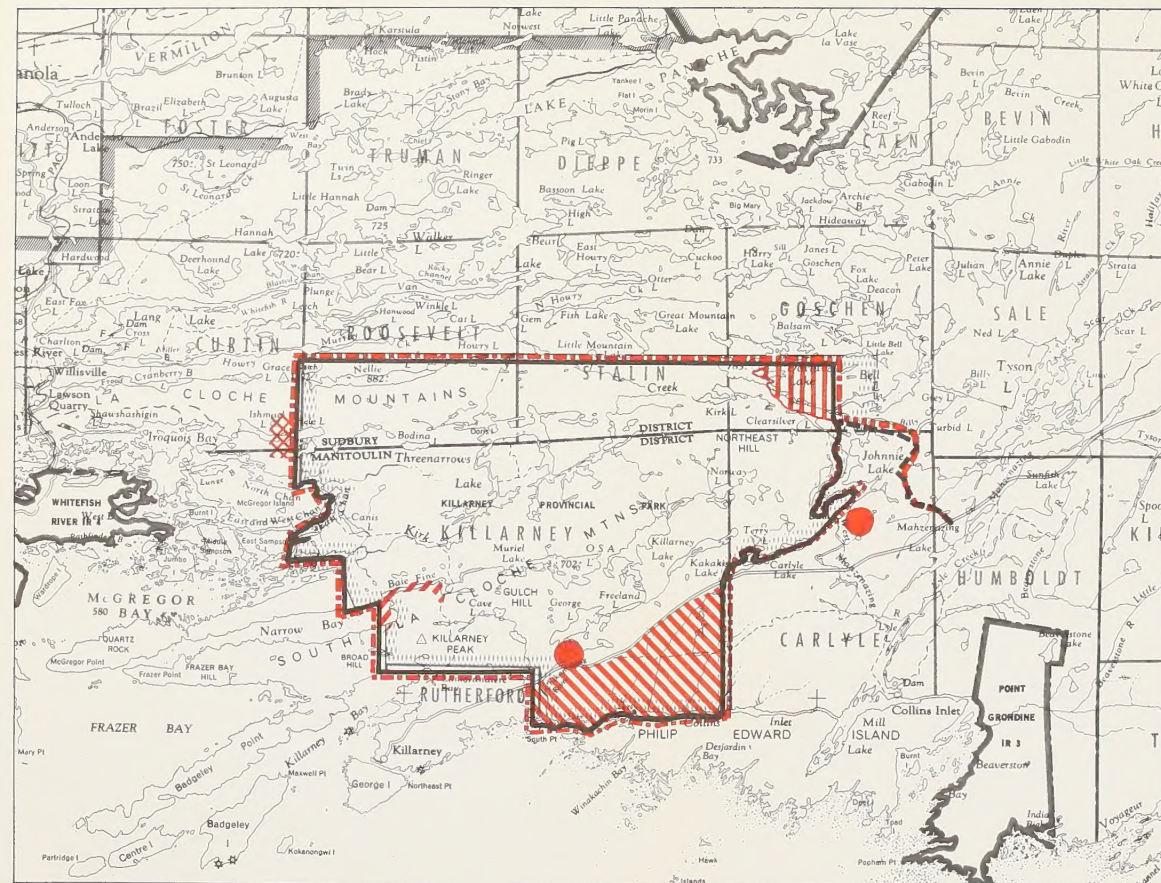
Plan Alternative C

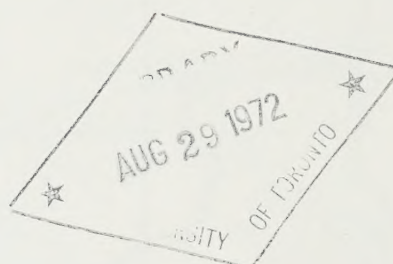
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11

Killarney Provincial Park

-  Existing Park Boundary
-  Park Reserve
-  Access Control
-  Hele Lake Addition
-  Deletion/Northeast corner of current Park
-  Deletion/waters of Baie Fine
-  Deletion/South of Hwy. 637
-  Logging Road







Ministry of Natural Resources

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